

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAJ-01 NIC-01 EB-11 DRC-01 /114 W

----- 065711

R 071455Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8656

INFO AMCONGEN MUNICH

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

/USMISSION BERLIN 1220

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT ECON RO

SUBJECT: "PAPER SHORTAGE" DECREE

REF: BUCHAREST A-116 (NOTAL)

1. CITING "WORLD PAPER SHORTAGE" (REFAIR), SCINTEIA
MAY 7 CARRIES "DECISION" BY SECRETARIAT OF PARTY
CENTRAL COMMITTEE ORDERING DRASTIC CUTBACKS OF ROMANIAN
PERIODICAL PRESS.

2. PARTY PAPER SCINTEIA DROPS TO SIX DAYS A WEEK;
OTHER CENTRAL PAPERS ARE REDUCED IN SIZE (E.G. ROMANIA
LIBERA) AND/OR BECOME WEEKLIES (E.G. MUNCA). IN
PROVINCES ALL BUT EIGHT COUNTY DAILIES BECOME WEEKLIES
AND ALL SUFFER SIZE REDUCTION. ORGAN OF COUNCIL
SOCIALIST CULTURE AND EDUCATION "CONTEMPORANUL"

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BECOMES "A POLITICAL REVIEW"; "FLACARA" AND "MAGAZIN",

TWO RATHER LOOSE POPULAR WEEKLIES, GO TO SOCIALIST UNITY FRONT TO "PRESENT ACHIEVEMENTS OF SOCIALIST ROMANIA" AND "DIFFUSE SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE" RESPECTIVELY. ALTHOUGH CIRCULATION HENCEFORTH IS TO BE ON BASIS OF "EFFECTIVE READER DEMAND", PARTY, STATE AND PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS ARE GENERALLY BARRED FROM USING STATE FUNDS FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS.

3. ACCORDING TO BUCHAREST GRAPEVINE, CULTURAL PRESS WILL GET AXE NEXT, WITH WEEKLIES BECOMING MONTHLIES AND MONTHLIES QUARTERLIES. ALSO, A PUBLISHING REORGANIZATION IS IN WIND, INVOLVING RECOMBINATIONS AND REDUCTION IN TOTAL NUMBER OF SEPARATE BOOK PUBLISHERS. DIMINUTION OF SIZE AND NUMBER OF BOOK PRINTING RUNS IS NOW ALMOST CERTAIN; SEVERAL HISTORIANS AND POETS AVER THEIR NEW EDITIONS HAVE BEEN CUT AS LOW AS 300-1000 COPIES.

4. CHIEF PRACTICAL IMPACT OF PRESS CUTS MAY BE TO LAY OFF SEVERAL THOUSAND (ONE SOURCE SAYS 4000) JOURNALISTS NATION-WIDE, AMOUNTING TO VIRTUAL PURGE OF PROFESSION. FOR EXAMPLE, SCINTEIA'S STAFF WILL BE CUT SUBSTANTIALLY AND ALL OR MOST OF ITS DOMESTIC CORRESPONDENTS WILL BE FIRED, LEAVING AGERPRESS AS SOLE PROVINCIAL NEWS-GATHERER.

5. COMMENT: RATIONALE OF RUMORED PERSONNEL CUTS STILL DIFFICULT TO ASSESS POLITICALLY. SOURCES GENERALLY TEND TO AGREE THAT CUTS AFFECT PRIMARILY UNDERLINGS AT PRESENT, NOT CHIEFS, AND THAT MAINLY OLDER DEADWOOD, INCLUDING SOME "STALINISTS" BUT PRESUMABLY OTHER NONCONFORMISTS WILL BE LOSERS, TO BENEFIT OF YOUNGER, BETTER QUALIFIED AND MORE "RELIABLE" PEOPLE. IN ANY EVENT, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT PARING OF PRESS HAS POLITICAL CUTTING EDGE AS WELL AS UNQUESTIONABLE ECONOMIC RATIONALE (E.G. FOREIGN EXCHANGE SAVING AND BUDGET REDUCTIONS) AND THAT SECRETARIAT "DECISION" IS INTEGRAL PART OF MAJOR CHANGES UNDERWAY SINCE MARCH PLENUM FURTHER CONSOLIDATING CEAUSESCU'S POWER. IT IS NOT CLEAR DEGREE TO WHICH SUCH A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MAJOR REDUCTION IN JOURNALIST PROFESSION ALSO HAS ELEMENT OF POLITICAL HOUSE-CLEANING BEING EFFECTED BY PARTY SECRETARY FOR PROPAGANDA BURTICA WHO ALSO SEEMINGLY ACQUIRES INFLUENCE THROUGH DECISION OVER SEVERAL ORGANS THAT HAVE BEEN UNDER JURISDICTION OF BURTICA'S RIVAL PARTY SECRETARY DUMITRU POPESCU. BARNES

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Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 MAY 1974
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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From: BUCHAREST
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ISecure: 1
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